

Pentecost XXIV: Lk. 13:31-35: The Lament over Jerusalem  
(same as Mt. 23:37-39, the Gospel for this day)

1. We have substituted Lk. 13:31-35 (Lent II, Series A) for our text because Lk. 13:34-35 is almost verbatim the same as Mt. 23:37-39.
2. Jesus spoke this text twice: in Luke it occurred in Perea, three months before the final Passover. In Matthew it occurred in Jerusalem during Holy Week.
3. Vs. 31: Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ "Just at that time" NASB. λέγοντες is attendant circumstance. Φαρισαῖοι, Marshall remarks: "These redactional explanations of the story at once arouse some suspicion since Denaux and Rese are able to argue that entirely opposed evaluations of the Pharisees (as hostile or friendly to Jesus respectively) can equally well be regarded as due to Luke's redaction." In other words, redaction critics come out with opposing views. Were these Pharisees Jesus' friends? Surely not. They may have posed as friends but surely were not genuine friends. Ἐξέλαθε καὶ πορεύου strong impvs. ἐντεῦθεν from Perea, Herod's territory. ὅτι is plainly causal. Note that forms of θελω are used of Herod here, Jesus (34) and the people of Jerusalem (34). Here it means "wants to kill you" (RSV, NIV, NASB, BECK). At bottom this means that Herod was an enemy and persecutor of the Truth. Did Herod send these Pharisees? We don't know. But, context indicates that the Pharisees were in total sympathy with Herod. They wanted Jesus out of this territory. Lenski thinks the Pharisees wanted Jesus in Jerusalem. Perhaps.
4. Vs. 32: πορευθέντες, circumstantial as an impv: "Go and tell". The tertium in "fox" is Herod's cunning. Bengel: "He calls Herod a fox, employing an epithet accurately characterizing him, on account of his cunning and hypocritical cowardice (cf. 9:7), which were but a feint." ταύτη literally "this fox" but English idiom prefers "that fox". All translations thus. Ἴδοῦ NEB and BECK "listen". These notes suggest: "Look now". Jesus is in no way frightened. ἀποτελῶ "I perform" but τελειοῦμαι is passive "I am brought to my goal." Thus Arndt, Lenski, Ylvisaker and Marshall, implying that God is the agent. It is God's will. Jesus is saying that He goes on His way performing miracles and thereafter will be brought to the goal of His crucifixion. No threats can detain Him or divert Him from God's will. Stoeckhardt: "Something similar happens to Jesus' disciples, to all of God's children. They accomplish their daily work, their calling on earth, and no power of earth or hell can or is permitted to disturb or hinder them. No one can shorten the time allotted by God for their work." Well put. The three days are not to be taken literally nor do they refer to Jesus' three-year ministry. They denote a short time. In this case, about three months. In His announcement to Herod, Jesus does not include the preaching of the Gospel. Herod roundly rejected this. Jesus speaks only of His miracles which were signs of His divinity and Messiahship.
5. Vs. 33: All our translations render πλὴν as "nevertheless". But Marshall aptly points out that it can mean "moreover" or "indeed". That makes good sense because the added thought here is δεῖ which always, with reference to Jesus' person and work, denotes the will of God. It is necessary in the sense that God willed it. There is no difference in this verse and 32 on the expression "today, tomorrow and the next day." But He adds πορεύεσθαι, not in the sense in which they used it in vs. 31 (a threat) but in the sense that God willed it, both in Perea and Judea. And note that Jesus repeats the causal ὅτι (cf. vs. 31) but the cause is not that of a pagan king. What does οὐκ ἐνδέχεται mean? KJV, RSV, NASB translate: "it cannot be that." Ylvisaker suggests that it has the same meaning as the Latin non fieri potest "it cannot be". That is correct. In what sense? The impossibility is due to the obduracy and rejection of the Jews. Jerusalem should have welcomed Jesus with open arms. But quite the opposite happened. This passage denotes the rule, not the exception. Most prophets were killed

in Jerusalem. Arndt: "We may think of Zacharias, mentioned by Jesus, 11:51, Jeremiah with his unspeakable sufferings, Urijah, spoken of Jer. 26:20-23, and Isaiah, whose martyrdom seems to be alluded to at Hebr. 11:37. Lagmann draws attention to Manasseh's activities directed against the prophets, II Kings 21:16, to the pertinent references Acts 7:51f and Hebr. 11:37ff, and to the persecutions of wicked Antiochus Epiphanes (I Macc. 1:10ff; II Macc. 4:7ff etc.)."

6. Vs. 34: Jesus' lament is found a second time at Mt. 23:37-39. He said it twice, here in Perea and three months later in Jerusalem. This should cause no difficulty. The repetition of the word "Jerusalem" is plaintive like that of David over Absalom. The two adjectival, present tense, participles denote the constant hateful attitude of the people of Jerusalem toward God's commissioned messengers throughout her history. The perf. pass. participle ἀπεσταλμένους means that they were sent with a lasting commission. ποσάκις is an exclamatory adverb. The Gospel of John (2:23; 5:1; 7:10) furnishes the information about these several visits. Chapters 5, 7-11 of John describe the obduracy of the Jerusalem Jews. Jn. 12:37-50 describes this same obduracy. ἠθέλησα denotes the saving will of Jesus. He earnestly meant it. καὶ οὐκ ἠθέλησατε, adversative καὶ and litotes: "But you refused." The point of comparison (bird and brood) is of course the great love of Jesus for the Jews. A bird, when its brood is in danger, covers the young with her wings and will die rather than let them be harmed. Young birds run under the wings for cover. Jerusalem adamantly refused. ὄν τρόπον, adv. acc. is like ὡς or καθὼς. ἐαυτῆς, reflexive possessive, is stronger than αὐτῆς. As the brood belongs to the mother, so Jerusalem belonged to Jesus, but refused. Note that τῆς with πτέρυγας is the possessive article "her". Arndt: "His efforts had always been treated with disdain. The passage is a powerful witness to God's desire to save all men, including those who ultimately are lost. Could the comforting teaching of universal grace be set forth more cogently?" Ylvisaker: "In diametric contrast to His will stands that of the 'children'. Hence they could not be saved: for divine grace is without restraint." Lenski: "Grace is not irresistible. . . . Damnation results from man's own will, which settles into permanent, obdurate, unaccountable resistance against God's will of grace. The more God draws the will with the power of grace, the more this will rejects God, until grace with its power can do no more."
7. Vs. 35: Note ἴδοῦ again (cf. 32). NEB: "Look, look!" It is a strong interjection which must always be translated by context. ἀφίεται means "is abandoned." οἶκος likely refers to the city of Jerusalem, not the temple. Note prominence of ὑμῖν, a dative of disadvantage. Arndt: "God will forsake it, you yourselves will have to furnish protection, and you will not be able to do it. The emphasis then lies on ὑμῖν. The Messiah would like to be their Helper, but they reject Him, so they have to ward off the enemies themselves." This is a prophecy and clearly shows Jesus' divinity. λέγω ὑμῖν always denotes Jesus' divine authority. οὐ μὴ is the emphatic negative: "You definitely will not see Me." It is remarkable that after Jesus' crucifixion and death none of His enemies saw Him. Only believers saw the Risen Christ. The quotation from Ps. 118:26, a Messianic Psalm, has been given three applications by commentators: a) Lk. 19:38, at the time when Jesus entered Jerusalem. That can't be. Jesus' enemies are not speaking there; b) The final judgment, when both friends and foes will have to acknowledge Him as Lord. Very unlikely; c) The conversion of individual Jews throughout the centuries. Thus Arndt, Ylvisaker and Lenski. These notes agree with this. By the way, the millennialists say that the New Covenant does not apply to the Jews until the supposed mass conversion of the Jews, Rom. 11:26. But that is wrong. Pentecost meant that the Gospel was to be preached to all, Jews and Gentiles. That is borne out in Acts. Furthermore, Rom. 11:1ff clearly says that God has not cast the Jews aside and Rom. 11:26, contextually, means that all the elect, both among Jews and Gentiles, will be saved.